Anchor in a Lockdown

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Anchor in a Lockdown

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Summary

"Will snatches the paper from Chilton's hands, and with every word he reads dread begins to overcome him. The Warden still has a smile on his face as Will lowers the paper.
'Good to see you understand. You start tomorrow.'"
In which Will is an unfortunate prison guard who is sent to work the red zone, the current home of Dr. Hannibal Lecter.

Notes

Written for a kink-meme I promised to write in June. JUNE. I'm a terrible person.
clockfaceclockface's Chinese translation of the first chapter of "Anchor in a Lockdown"
http://clockface5.dreamwidth.org/2794.html

Chapter 1

Will doesn't know what to expect for his first day at the prison. He was told by his superiors that it should be easy. All he had to do was patrol a specific section of the prison and make sure the inmates didn't cause trouble for both the guards or themselves. Truth be told Will didn't even want to be doing this. Up until recently he was just an ordinary police officer in Baltimore, but an arrest gone wrong left him with a knife wound in his shoulder. He wanted out of law enforcement, but his superiors wouldn't let him go, even after all he'd been through. This was their way of letting Will "relax", keep his mind sharp, and get over the shock of the attack before he made any hasty decisions.

Slipping out of the main hall, Will follows an older guard whose name tag reads "Jack" as he shows him where he's to be stationed. Jack is nice enough, but Will can tell he would rather be somewhere else. He informs Will because of his injury he is to be placed in the low risk – inmates who are either to be released soon or they are "well behaved" and deemed not a threat.

"Now," Jack starts. "If there's a problem you just hit the red button at the end of the hall." He gives Will a once over before shrugging. "Or take care of them yourself. Even with your shoulder you have more experience out in the field than most of the guards here." This makes Will pause.

"What do you mean? I thought there were qualifications to be a prison guard."

The older guard nods. "There are, but the Warden just hires any he thinks are either strong or can handle a gun. There are men who, like you and me, know what their doing, but they're becoming fewer and fewer by the years. Soon this place will be run by thick brained muscle men who are too trigger happy. I hope I'm gone by the time that happens." Jack turns to continue walking and Will obediently follows.

"But how can the Warden get away with that?" Will asks. "Hasn't someone said anything?"

"Even if they did," Jack grumbles, "Nobody would listen. The Warden's got people." The walk is quiet as Will is lead through his section and other low risk zones, looking at the inmates and getting a feel for what he is up against. Soon they are walking through the zones and to the locker rooms, the cafeteria, and finally back to the main hall. Jack looks at his watch and seems to mull over something. Will stands quietly as the guard comes to a conclusion and jerks his head to the left.

"Come on. I'll show you where the other sections are. Just in case you need to go there. It's unlikely, but just so you know."

As they climb to the different levels of the prison, Jack rattles off names of the different inmates along with their level of risk.

"The only one you should keep your eye on in your section is Franklyn Froidevaux. He's been here for two years as an accomplice to Tobias Budge's murder. The guy ratted out

Budge and got a lighter sentence. He won't cause you any troubles, but don't get too close to him. The inmates are all allowed access to the yard outside and that's where Froidevaux has been known to grab onto other inmates and guards. He doesn't mean trouble, but he gets too attached. Found himself in solitary a few times already,"

"What of his partner?" Will asks. "Tobias?"

"Budge is usually in the medium level section, but currently he's been sent to solitary for escaping his cell and attacking Froidevaux when he was out in the yard. He's one to look out for as well." Will nods in understanding and the guard continues to name off the important inmates, giving the reason why they were at the prison as well as horror stories of what they've done while at their stay. They soon walk pass a door that is adorned with locks and heavily guarded.

"This," Jack points to the door. "This is where we keep the inmates who have been deemed as unstable or extremely dangerous. This is level higher than the high risk, the red zone. If any of the inmates escape from this section all Hell would break loose." He chuckles. "Granted, sometimes they are allowed out in a special spot in the yard by themselves, but only if they behave."

"Who's in there?" Will asks, but Jack shakes his head.

"You don't want to know. However," Jack sighs, suddenly looking much older. "You probably will hear stories about them. Do you know anything about Dr. Hannibal Lecter?"

"Dr. Hannibal Lecter?" Will echoes. "The name sounds vaguely familiar."

"As it should. His face was everywhere twelve years back. How old are you, Graham?"

"I'm twenty-seven, sir," Will answers, "I was maybe fourteen at the time of Lecter's capture. I didn't have much means of public media, and when I did it was local news only." Now that Will thinks about it, he did remember learning about Dr. Lecter while he was in college and training to be a cop. He had heard the stories and knows very well what the good doctor did for his free time. However, he can not for the life of him remember what he looks like.

Jack just nods his head at Will's explanation before continuing their journey back to the main lobby. "Trust me when I say this: the less you know about Dr. Lecter, the better. Understand?"

Will just simply nods.

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The rest of the days at the prison go smoothly. Will goes on his rounds in low risk, checking on the inmates and making sure they're behaving. By the end of the first week some of the inmates call him by name, usually just saying "hi". Will wishes he got along as well with his fellow guards. Most of them ignore Will, marking him as an outcast. Will is use to this sort of treatment from his childhood, so it doesn't bother him too much. He does wonder though if their distaste of him stems from the fact the Warden didn't hand pick him as he did with the

others. Perhaps it is because of his experience on the filed, or maybe because by the second and third weeks he had gained the affection of almost every inmate in his section. They all call him “Pup”, which at first Will thought was their way of making fun of him. However, Franklyn told him differently.

“It's because you look so lost half the time. Makes some of the fellas want to reach out and pat you on the head,” Will isn't sure if this explanation makes the nickname any better or worse. Unfortunately, when Will has to patrol a different section – also a low risk zone – they all recognize him as “The Pup”. Because trying to get them to stop would be near impossible, Will ignores the nickname as best as he can.

It's even harder to ignore when the guards are aware of it as well. However, unlike the inmates, when they use the name it is scornful and mocking. Will often times hears them calling him “bitch”, but they are wise enough not to say it in his face.

Not all is bad with his fellow guards. Jack sometimes sits and talks with him on occasion at lunch, or he patrols with him. Another guard, Barney, is fast on making it to Will's small friend list. The guard had been working at the prison about as long as Jack, but he mostly stays in the high risk and red zone. Barney tells Will stories about his family or about what had happened in the prison. He usually works behind the lock adorned door where Dr. Hannibal Lecter was kept. However, he was reluctant to tell any stories about him.

“Lecter isn't too much of a bad guy. You don't disrespect him, he won't disrespect you.” He says one day in the lunch room, biting into a ham sandwich. “He doesn't tolerate rudeness. That was his M.O before he was caught. He only took those who were rude.”

“Sounds charming,” Will mutters, picking at his own food. His pain medications are making him lose his appetite, granted the cafeteria food isn't all appealing. “Remind me why you like him?”

Barney chuckles before ruffling Will's hair. “That snarky attitude of yours is going to get you into trouble,” he teases. “When you've been around as long as I have you form a friendship of sorts with the inmates. The ones that behave anyway. I've been here long before Dr. Lecter arrived and through all the years of his incarceration we've gotten on the right foot. However,” Barney pauses and gives Will a stern look. “Don't think for a second I've looked over the reason why he's here. Just because we get along and I enjoy his company does not mean I trust him. You remember that. Don't become too attached to any of the inmates.”

“Note taken,” Will replies, growing uncomfortable at Barney's stare. He looks down at the food in front of him. “Besides, I'm only here for six months. The likelihood of me getting stationed at Dr. Lecter's zone is unlikely.”

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Over the next two months Will listens to the stories the guards tell one another, most of them about Dr. Lecter. Will catches glimpses of the conversations as he patrols or sits in the cafeteria. Currently, he's standing in the locker room, slipping his jacket off as a group of guards who seem to be a bit young enter the room, talking quietly amongst themselves.

“I heard he ripped some woman's face off with his bare hands,” one guard exclaims.

“Bull-shit,” argues another. “there's no way he could have done that!”

“But it's true! It was in the papers.”

“I heard he chopped up a Federal Agent who was too close to catching him,”

“Didn't he make someone eat their own arm before killing them?”

“How about the time he bit the nurse's face. The hag was ugly before, but I bet she has to pay someone to fuck her now.”

The comment earns a laugh from the entire group and Will has to make himself unclench his fists from his jacket. This sort of behavior wouldn't have been allowed back where Will was from. The chief would have bitten anybody's head off if he heard them bad mouthing any woman, no matter what she had done or looked like. These *boys* didn't have any respect for women, hell they didn't have respect for anyone. They had gotten over quietly making fun of Will behind his back to now opening calling him names in his face. If Will wasn't injured he would have immediately punched the first one to call him “bitch” in the mouth. These guards were reckless, they weren't suited to be prison guards; to be in charge of keeping dangerous men in their cells.

“Hey, I didn't know they allowed dogs in the prison now. Better make sure he doesn't piss everywhere,” One guard, Freddy Lounds, says loudly, bringing all the attention towards Will. His friends laugh and make comments while Will grits his teeth and silently seethes.

These boys are rude.

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Will is called into the Warden's office at the end of the third month. He met him once on his first day, and at the time he didn't quite know what to make of the man except for the feeling that something was off in the man. After hearing how he picks the guards, his opinion of the Warden slips down further. The Warden, Dr. Chilton, stands when Will enters his office, a smile on his face. Will weakly smiles back.

“Hello, Mr. Graham. I bet you're wondering why I called you in today.” Will gives a slight inclination of his head before Chilton continues. “You see, Barney Matthews is going to be out of commission for a couple of weeks and we need someone to pick up his shift,” Dr Chilton explains, his hands moving with each word. “Since there are plenty of guards in your section, I've decided to move you to Barney's station. Just until he's better.” Will stares at Chilton for a moment, letting the information sink in. Realization soon takes over.

“But Barney's section is in the red zone. I was told I wouldn't have to go there because of my injury.”

“Yes, initially,” Chilton begins slowly, a smile still on his face. “But since you seem to be getting better I've decided to move you. And before you say anything,” Chilton adds,

watching as Will's mouth opens to object. “I've already asked your superiors and they agreed. Look,” He pulls out a folder and the file with his boss's signature. “They have already agreed with me.”

Will snatches the paper from Chilton's hands, and with every word he reads dread begins to overcome him. The Warden still has a smile on his face as Will lowers the paper.

“Good to see you understand. You start tomorrow.”

--Day One--

Will takes a few tentative steps into the corridor, listening as the door swings shut behind him and relocks. The red zone wasn't any different than the low risk with the exception of the cells being further apart from each other, and thick glass keeping the inmates inside. Will stands still a few moments, trying to get the courage to walk down the corridor. It's silly, Will thinks, to be frightened in a section filled with crazy people safely put away behind locked doors. He's dealt with the insane before, but he always had his partner beside him or his fellow officers. Now, he was alone. There was only one guard allowed in the red zone, which seemed strange to Will. He remembers Barney mentioning this a few days before he went on sick leave.

“It's so if one of the inmates breaks out there are less casualties. Better one to be dead than two. At least that's what the Warden says.” Will could tell at the time Barney didn't agree with Chilton's mindset, and he couldn't blame him.

So Will stands alone, silently looking down the corridor. In the back of Will's mind he knew there was nothing to be frightened of, but the knowledge of Dr. Lecter being in one of the cells truly terrifies him. He failed to ask Chilton which cell was his, but it was too late now. Taking a deep breath, Will began to walk, his steps echoing loudly in the silent corridor.

The first few inmates are sleeping, and the next completely ignores him. Some turn to look as he walks, but lose interest and return to staring at the walls or, if they were lucky, reading a book. This keeps going until Will begins to walk closer to the end of the hall. As he peers into one of the cells, he finds the inmate is already staring in his direction with such an intensity it makes Will jump a little. The man's face is completely blank, eyes following him as he passes the cell. Unlike the other inmates, this one continues to watch until Will is out of sight. Unnerved by this, Will is reluctant to turn around and head back to the door. He waits a few moments, pretending to double check the empty cell at the very end before walking again.

The man is still watching, his eyes now curious as Will passes by. Feeling the need to do something, anything, Will nods in greeting before ducking his head down and continuing on his way.

“So,” a calm voice calls to him. “You must be Officer Graham.”

Will freezes in place, the inmate of the cell he's standing in front of looks at him curiously before ignoring him. Will takes a moment to breathe before stepping forward again.

“You know, it's rude to ignore someone when they are talking to you.” the man speaks again, and Will can hear the underlying danger if he continues to ignore him.

No, Will knew who this was.

Taking another breath Will returns to stand in front of the inmate's cell. The inmate is standing now, close to the front corner of the cell as if trying to get closer to Will. Once Will's in sight again the man stands in the center of the cell, eyes taking in the image of Will. In return, Will shifts uncomfortably before getting a grip on himself.

“Dr. Hannibal Lecter, I presume.” Will says, hoping it didn't sound as pathetic as he thought it did. The man smiles and inclines his head.

“It's so good to know people still remember me even after I've been away for so long.” Will decides against telling the man he only recently remembered that he even existed. The other might find it rude. Instead, Will shrugs his good shoulder.

“You're all the guards talk about,” He explains. “Kinda hard to not hear about you.” This earns him a chuckle, Hannibal's strange eyes continuing to bore into him. Will decides that looking at the man's chest was less unnerving. “However, that doesn't explain how you know my name.”

A secretive smile crosses Hannibal's features. “Even though I'm in this lovely establishment,” Hannibal says as he gestures around his cell. “I am still allowed out side once in awhile.”

“For good behavior,” Will supplies. “Barney wouldn't have given out my name, which means you overheard another inmate or guard talking about me.”

“Very good.” Will could see Hannibal's expression had shifted from secretive to amused. “Why won't you look me in the eyes, Officer Graham?” Will flinched but tried to pull it off as a shrug. He could tell Hannibal wasn't buying it.

“I don't have to tell you.”

“You don't, do you?”

“Correct.”

The two stand in silence; Hannibal staring at Will's face while Will continues to look at Hannibal's blue prison garb. Compared to the other inmates in the prison, Hannibal's outfit looked well taken care of. There were no stains or dirt to be seen. Will guessed he was a clean freak. Everything must be in place; everything must be spotless.

“Where is Barney, if I may ask?” Hannibal draws Will's attention back to the present conversation. He blinks and looks down the hall where he's supposed to stand during his time in the section.

“He is gone for a couple days,” Will says. “I'm taking his place until he returns.”

“I see,” Lecter replies. Something in his tone makes Will look at him and he notices the small smile. “So we have plenty of time to get acquainted then.”

Will makes the mistake of looking up into his eyes, the dark orbs calculating and curious. Will cannot hold back a shiver before he narrows his eyes.

“Good day, Dr. Lecter.” And he starts to leave for his post. Hannibal says nothing, but Will can tell the man is amused. After all, Will was stuck in the section for the next two hours. In fifteen minutes he would have to check on the inmates again, and, once again, have to pass by Hannibal.

He was not going to enjoy this.

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He can tell, however, that Hannibal was enjoying this. A lot.

Each time Will walks past the man's cell, Hannibal tries to strike a conversation with him.

What's your name?

Why won't you tell me your name?

Why are you working here, Officer Graham?

This isn't a permanent job, is it, Officer Graham?

You're being rude. Why won't you talk to me?

You know what happens to rude people, don't you, Officer Graham?

Will remained silent each time, but his posture was stiff. Even when he's standing near the doors he can hear Hannibal trying to get him to come back. He's passed by his door six times: thrice down the hall and thrice back to the doors. He didn't want to go down again, didn't want to have Dr. Lecter try and coax him into a conversation. He had heard the stories.

Sighing, he begins to walk down the hall for a seventh time, rubbing at his shoulder. The pain medication had worn off in the previous hour, and it was starting to become unbearable. While it had been three months since the attack the wound was not healing properly. In his sleep he would scratch and rub at it, irritating the skin to the point of drawing blood. He had to go in and get it restitched because of his unconscious behavior.

Rotating the shoulder, Will didn't notice he had passed Hannibal's cell until the man spoke.

“What's wrong with your shoulder?”

Will quickly removes his hand from the wounded limb and guiltily ducks his head.

“Nothing's wrong with it.” Hannibal gently “tsked” before motioning Will closer to the glass.

“Let me take a look.” Will gave the man a horrified look and Hannibal laughed. “I was once a surgeon, Officer Graham. I think I can help you with your problem.”

Will continues to stare at Hannibal before giving a humorless laugh. “No. No, thank-you, Dr. Lecter.” Will says, beginning to walk away. “I know what's wrong with it.”

“Is it the reason you're here, Officer Graham?”

Will contemplates ignoring him, but eventually he sighs and turns to face him. “Yes, it is.”

“What happened?”

“...I was attacked on the job. Instead of giving me time off, my superiors sent me here. Didn't want my mind to languish away.” Will snorts, scratching his face. His stubble is getting longer, he notes.

“How did it happen, the attack?” Hannibal asks, head tilted slightly to the side. Will dares to look at his face and finds the man is looking curiously at his shoulder, as if he can try and see the damage done underneath the clothing.

“My partner and I got separated, and before I knew it the man jumped me from behind and stabbed me in the shoulder.” The shoulder in question begins to throb in pain once more, and Will starts to rub it.

“Stop that.”

Will immediately drops his hand before he can register what's happened. He glares at Dr. Lecter, but Hannibal smiles, pleased with Will's actions. In retaliation, Will walks away, ignoring Hannibal's attempts to call him back. He doesn't keep at it, falling silent when he realizes Will is not going to return. He doesn't need to worry though. He'll be back in next fifteen minutes.

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It's a half our before Will's shift is over when the doors swing open. Will jumps, turning to watch as two guards walk in, laughing at some earlier made comment. When they spot Will, they fall silent.

“Hey, this isn't your section, bitch. Why are you here?”

Will grits his teeth and forces the urge to punch Freddy in the face away. He can't afford to get into a fight. While he could easily overtake a man such as Freddy, with the other guard present and his shoulder acting up he knew the odds were against him. For now.

“Chilton sent me here just until Mr. Matthews returns from sick leave,” Will says, folding his arms over his chest. “My shift isn't over, and I was told only one guard is allowed in the red zone.” The other guard looks away guiltily, but Freddy just scoffs.

“As of right now it is, and you don't get to tell us what to do, bitch. Just because you're a high and mighty police officer doesn't mean shit here. Now, run off back to the safety of the baby

section.” Laughing again, Freddy walks off, dismissing Will completely. The other guard looks at Will for a moment before following after Freddy. Will watches as they pass the cells, taking note that they don't even look in them to check on the inmates. Shaking in anger, Will turns to leave.

“That was rude,” He hears faintly and he freezes.

Turning back around, Will sees Freddy and the other guard have paused and are standing in front of Lecter's cell. Even from where Will is standing, both men look terrified. Will cannot hear the rest of the conversation, but soon Freddy is returning to his side, face red with either anger or embarrassment.

“I'm... Sorry, Officer Graham. It... It won't happen again.”

Will blinked, glancing at the other guard who stayed at Dr. Lecter's cell before looking back at Freddy.

“...I accept your apology.” Will says, and Freddy's face turns redder. Will stays rooted in place, confused at the whole ordeal. When he turns to leave again, Lecter's voice calls out to him.

“Have a good day, Officer Graham. I look forward to seeing you tomorrow.”

Flinching, Will all but runs out of the section. He doesn't calm down until the security doors shut and lock behind him.

Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

> Thank-you for all the comments and kudos! They always make my day. I'm sorry I'm slow to update, I unfortunately have a tendency to become bored with my writing and start to work on other things. With school now in session and papers needing to be written, I'm going to be updating whenever I can.
> Also, special mention to clockfaceclockface for translating the first chapter into Chinese, so for any of you who would rather read it in Chinese or are learning the language give it a look. (http://clockface5.dreamwidth.org/2794.html)

--Day four--

“Good afternoon, Officer Graham,” Dr. Lecter greets as Will walks past his cell. It has been three days since Will has been working the red zone, and so far the only problems he has run into is Lecter's insistent small talk. He tries to ignore him the best he can, but slips into conversation occasionally.

“Why won't you tell me your name?” Dr. Lecter asks.

“Why don't you just ask one of the morning guards?” Will counters back.

“It's not the same,” Lecter laments. “They are crude and lack proper manners. You, on the other hand, are different from them. It would be a waste of breath on my part to talk to such uncivilized men just to learn your first name.”

“If you know my last name, how come you don't know my first?”

“You are always referred to as either “Officer Graham”, that *rude* dog's name, or simply “Pup”. Now, I could call you the latter, but I feel you wouldn't appreciate it as much.”

Will can feel his face light up at the mention of “Pup”. Even Dr. Lecter knows about the name!

“Of course, I could call you Pup just to get that reaction out of you.” Lecter grins, and Will storms away, trying to will the blush off of his face. “I think it's a cute name, Officer Graham,” Lecter calls after him. “It fits you perfectly.”

Will's face doesn't cool off for another five minutes.

--Day seven--

“How is your shoulder?” Dr Lecter inquires, gesturing for Will to come closer to the glass. Will refuses. He's maintained the same distance since the day he's started. He's not changing it now. Instead Will rotates his right shoulder cautiously, the pain medication he took before his shift still in effect.

“Doesn't bother me now.” And after a moment's thought, “Thank-you for asking.”

Dr. Lecter smiles, and Will notices the genuine intentions behind it.

“I do wish you would let me see it,” The older man shakes his head sadly. “I've seen you rub it from time to time. Does it still itch?”

In reflex, Will shoves his hands in his pockets as if he can prevent them from any future actions. He didn't like how closely Dr. Lecter was watching him, how he seemed to track his every movements. He supposed it is because he was a hunter, in a sense. Had to track and watch the movements of his victims before he could pounce.

“I don't know,” Will answered in a small voice, his thoughts away from him as he imagined how his victims must have reacted when they were caught. Did they cry? Did they beg to be let go? Did they apologize for being rude to a man they may or may not have known? How inexcusable were their actions to warrant the attention of the doctor's fury?

“Don't know what, Officer Graham?”

Will snaps out of his thoughts, eyes flashing up to Lecter's face before zipping away to the floor. He didn't like what he saw. Didn't like the unrelenting curiosity that shone from those strange eyes. But, what he especially didn't like was the slight worry he found.

“My mind likes to go away sometimes.” He doesn't realize he's spoken until it's too late. Ducking his head in shame, Will hurries back to his post, ignoring Lecter's calls to bring him back.

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It has been two days since his encounter with Dr. Lecter, and he refuses to speak with the man after his slip. He still nods in greeting or exchanges pleasantries, but Will does not allow himself to be pulled into conversation. He felt like a failure, letting slip such a personal secret to a killer.

His lack of conversation doesn't stop Dr. Lecter, for the man tries to coax Will into talking to him again with different topics.

What's your favorite type of food, Officer Graham? I myself, while not my favorite meal, enjoy coda alla vaccinara from time to time. Have you ever tried it?

Do you have any pets? I could never stand the idea of having an animal in the house.

You look tired, Officer Graham. Have you been sleeping well? Is your shoulder bothering you? I wish you would let me take a look at it.

But Will refuses to let anything personal get through. He doesn't enjoy ignoring Dr. Lecter. Barney was correct when he said the man was pleasant to talk to, but he had gotten too close. He can't understand it, but he feels like he can tell him anything. Worryingly, he finds he *wants* to tell the man everything.

So, instead Will keeps his head down and avoids looking at the cannibal, listening to his questions and mentally answering each and every one.

--Day 10--

Will still has his usual rounds in low risk before heading up to the red zone after lunch. He makes sure the inmates aren't up to no good, or to see if anything is amiss. Most of the time his inmates don't cause trouble, usually pulling him into a conversation when they are out in the yard or secured in their cells. They are much easier to talk to than Dr. Lecter, usually retelling stories of their hay-day or before they got into the criminal business.

However, there are times when Will had to get rough with them. With his shoulder healing he can risk breaking up fights, getting in between one or two inmates with grudges against each other. Most of the time his presence cools the rising tempers, but not all were chummy with the officer.

He wanders around in the yard, careful eyes watching as the inmates interact with one another. Everything is calm with none of the gangs trying to claw at each other. A day doesn't go by when Will or another guard has to step in between them.

Will does one more look over before glancing off into the distance where another yard is located. Since he's worked here it has always been empty. However, now there are guards everywhere, standing in the watch towers with their guns poised. Will stares, afraid something's happened and he'd missed it.

“Looks like someone in the red zone is allowed out in the yard today,” Crawford mutters, looking briefly over at the excitement before ignoring it all together.

“There is?” Will asks, moving closer to the older guard. “Who is it?”

But Crawford shrugs, a bored expression falling over his features. Will waits to see if he has anything to say, but continues on with his rounds when he remains silent. He walks a few steps before he hears someone following him.

“I know who the inmate is, Officer Graham.” Will makes a face before schooling his features as he turns to face Franklyn. The man has yet to try and get too close to Will, which he's grateful for, but he still stands on alert when the inmate stands a respectable distance away.

“And how do you know?” Will asks.

“Because I over heard some of the guys talking about it.” Franklyn replies eagerly. Will stares at the man, waiting for him to continue, but when he remains silent Will asks, “Well then, who is it?”

Franklyn smiles, practically giddy with delight. Leaning in close, he whispers, “It's Dr. Hannibal Lecter.”

Will jerks back. Why is Dr. Lecter in the next yard? Why is he out of his cell?

Franklyn continues. “Story is Dr. Lecter asked if he could go out in the yard earlier this week, and the Warden granted his request.”

Will groans and rubs his eyes. Of course Dr. Lecter would request time in the yard the same time as Will. How did this man even figure out his schedule. Will decides he rather not know.

Dismissing Franklyn, Will walks closer to the fence. Separating the two yards is two fences with a road the bus takes to bring new inmates in between. He tries to peer through the fences, but he cannot see anyone in the yard besides other guards. Will becomes aware of how ridiculous he looks, trying to catch the sight of a man who he refused to talk to and made him uncomfortable. Shaking his head in disgust, Will removes himself from the fence and begins his patrol once more.

As he nears the basketball court, Will spots a small group of inmates. Getting closer, Will also notices that the group circling two inmates in a heated argument. Will quickens his pace, putting his hand on his baton just in case.

“What's going on?” He asks, his officer persona kicking in. When most of the inmates see him they disperse, trying to be inconspicuous. The ones that do stay look nervous, looking back and forth between the original two in the middle and Graham. Will ignores them for now, his focus on the leaders. He recognizes one of them, a man by the name of Francis Dolarhyde, who should by all means be in high risk and not allowed to be with the others. The other man Will has never seen before.

“What's going on?” Will asks again, staring both men down. Dolarhyde hasn't given Will trouble yet, but he's heard what the man's done to earn his stay at the prison. If anything, he should be like Lecter and thrown in the red zone. Will keeps his distance whenever he has to come near the man.

Dolarhyde looks like he wants to say something, but he casts his eyes about before shrugging.

“Just a little argument, Officer.” He replies, though he shoots the other man a cold glare out of the corner of his eyes. “Just a disagreement.”

“About what?” Will inquires, looking at the other man as well. The other inmate remains quiet, but a smile tugs at the corner of his lips. Will doesn't like it one bit.

“I'm going to have to ask you to stop arguing,” Will says sternly. “Either move to different sides of the yard or go back to your cells.”

The few inmates standing around them immediately take off, leaving the three of them alone. Dolarhyde sneers, his cleft making it turn into a snarl. In the end, however, he does back

down, moving away from Will and the strange inmate. Turning his full attention to the man, Will finds he is still smiling.

“Don't cause trouble,” Will orders, hand still on his baton. “Or else your yard privileges will be taken.”

He turns to walk away, but pauses when the stranger begins to speak.

“My apologies, Officer Graham. It won't happen again.”

Will looks over his shoulder to the man, finding his unnerving smirk still there. The man bows his head and holds out a hand. “My name is Mason Verger. A pleasure to meet you at last.”

Will stares at the hand before looking back up at Verger. “Charmed.” He says and continues on his way. He goes only a few steps when he realizes the inmate is following him.

“I had heard about your wit, Officer Graham, and I must say you are a wonder.” the inmate says, walking a safe distance from Will. He has his hands behind his back and there is an air of nonchalance around him. Will watches, unnerved.

“Are you new here?” He finally asks, but by the swiftly growing smile he gathers he's guessed wrong.

“Recently out of solitary,” Verger replies, stopping to look around. They had reached the other side of the yard, the one closest to where Dr. Lecter was supposed to be. Will takes his eyes off Verger to peer into the other yard once more, and he finally spots Lecter. While the cannibal has his back turned to him, Will can see the man is wearing a straight jacket along with something covering his head.

“Amazing, isn't he?” Verger has a dreamy expression on his face. His smile seems to be permanently etched onto his face as he brings a hand to stroke his chin in thought. “I would give anything to watch him in action.”

His smile widens, all teeth and gums. Will backs away from the inmate, hand fixed onto his sheathed baton. The expression disappears, and Verger turns from Dr. Lecter to Will. “I wonder what would happen,” he begins slowly. “If I broke his new favorite.”

Will blinks in confusion. What's that supposed to mean? Dr. Lecter has a favorite? Favorite what?

Verger smiles politely once more, nodding in his direction. “Have a nice day, Officer Graham.”

Will watches as the inmate walks away toward a group of his fellows, a sense of unease falling upon him.

It is nearing noon when Will is approached by an inmate. Will watches the man, noting his hunched shoulders and clasped hands. He looks nervous, which makes Will suspicious.

“It's almost time to head back inside.” Will reminds him, trying to pin the inmate's thoughts. He had seen him before in the yard, but he wasn't in any of his sections. A medium risk, perhaps.

The man nods his head in understanding, but remains rooted in his spot. Will narrows his eyes, his suspicion growing more and more. The man looks like he wants to be as far from Will as possible, his eyes shifting from the ground, to Will, to somewhere over Will's shoulder, then over at the yard which Dr. Lecter is still housed. The man rings his hands, his face pinched in unease before looking over Will's shoulder again. His gaze lingers, making Will nervous. Taking a risk, Will glances over his shoulder.

Pain blooms from the back of his head and his vision blackens momentarily. Gasping at the sudden pain, Will stumbles to his knees, hand clutching at his head. He regains his sense and turns on the inmate, but the man strikes again, his fist colliding with Will's left eye. Will is knocked from his feet, the man upon him in an instant. Fortunately, Will is fast enough to bring a hand up, protecting his neck. Using the man's weight against him, Will wraps his legs around his attacker's legs and rolls them over. He punches the man in the face, feeling the bone crunch under his knuckles, and the man howls in pain. Will grabs his handcuffs and gets one hand locked when the man digs his fingers into Will's injured shoulder.

The scream is cut short as the man punches Will in the face once again, but he manages to miss breaking his nose. Will growls and strikes back, ignoring the pain in his shoulder as punches him. With one hand Will manages to keep the inmate at bay while the other reaches for his belt. Finding the needed item, Will jabs the taser into the man's chest, finally subduing him. Will doesn't hesitate in rolling him over and successfully locking both hands behind his back.

Will stands, legs shaking as he looks around, hand going for his gun. The inmates around him watch in terror, looking at the scene in front of them before many gaze across at the other yard. Will has no time to wonder as Crawford and the other guards come running towards him. As soon as Crawford grabs his arm he slumps forward, clutching at his throbbing shoulder.

“Are you alright, Graham?” Crawford asks while the other guards drag Will's unconscious attacker and guide the rest of the inmate inside. Will nods, but he can feel blood dripping down his face and his body aches all over. He stands straight and Crawford lets go of his arm, but stands close in case Will needs him.

Walking back to the prison, Will remembers the inmates' frightened expressions. Looking over, he spots the lone figure of Dr. Lecter standing near the fence. Even with the distance between them, Will can feel the doctor's gaze, his strange eyes watching through the holes of his mask.

As soon as Will steps into the red zone his attention is drawn to the quiet tapping down the hall. He stubbornly stands by the door, but eventually gives in and begins to limp down to Dr. Lecter's cell. When he reaches the older man's cell, he refuses to look at him, fixing his gaze on the concrete floor, waiting for Dr. Lecter to say something.

There is silence between them for a few moments before Hannibal makes a disapproving noise.

“Whoever patched you up did a terrible job,” the man says, disdain dripping in his voice. “Look at that bandaging. Such a mess.”

Will remains quiet, although a tired smirk works its way to his face. The man is a total neat freak.

Dr. Lecter sighs before crooking his finger. Will remains where he stands, still suffering the aftermath of the fight. He felt like a failure. He should have seen it coming, should have paid closer attention to the signs. He knew something was wrong, but he still ended up broken.

“Officer Graham.” Dr. Lecter says softly, his hand extended as if waiting for Will to take it. The officer closes his eyes in defeat. He's tired, in pain, and all he wants to do is go home for the day. He relents and steps closer to the glass door.

“Lift your head, please.”

Will does as he's told, but keeps his eyes averted. He follows Dr. Lecter's instructions as he examines him.

“Can you move your head to the left for me? Good. Now right. Good, does your neck hurt at all? No?” He then holds one of his fingers up to eye level. “Don't move your head.”

Will reluctantly raises his eyes so he can follow Lecter's finger as he moves it around. He's able to keep track of his hand, but his left eye continually stings with the motion.

“You have a broken blood vessel in the left eye,” the doctor comments, seemingly unconcerned as he lowers his hand. Will glowers at the obvious observation before looking back to the ground. “But your pupils aren't dilated, which is good. Hold your arms up for a moment.”

Will flinches as he tries to move his right arm, his now re-injured shoulder aching in protest. Dr. Lecter stops him from trying to move it any higher.

“Could you move your uniform to the side, Officer Graham?”

“No.”

Dr. Lecter is taken aback for a moment, not expecting Will to speak at all. He regains his composure quickly.

“...No.” He echoes, his face completely blank. Will continues to look at the ground, his hand coming up to rub his forehead. “Do you have a headache, Officer Graham?”

“What do you think?” Will snaps, instantly regretting his tone.

“Why are you still here?” Hannibal continues, tilting his head to the side. “You are not in any condition to be working.”

“There's no backup.” Will remarks. He's feeling a little light headed, and it takes all his strength not to lie on the floor and pass out. He rubs his face again as he sways on his feet, barely comprehending Dr. Lecter's next words.

“We'll see about that. Officer Graham, would you please go and grab the attention of the guards outside?”

Tired and in pain, Will does what he's told. However, the doors barely open when he finds the floor flying up to his face and darkness takes over.

--Day 14--

Will hasn't fully recovered from his ordeal in the yard, but he is only given a few days leave. His arm is now in a sling, the doctor saying it would hasten the healing process. At the moment, Will is back to where he started in low risk - not that he's complaining, of course.

As he patrols, he notices something's different. The inmates that usually say hello to him duck their heads when he comes near, and the ones who were indifferent to him back away or seem skittish. He would have put it off as a strange coincidence, but the other guards were doing the same thing. Many went out of their way just to avoid him, especially Lounds.

“Can I ask you something?” Will asks Crawford as they stand in the cafeteria, watching the sea of blue garbed inmates grab trays and eat their food. Crawford makes an encouraging noise, and Will continues. “What happened when I was gone?”

“What are you talking about, Graham?” Crawford growls, his posture stiff. Will narrows his eyes.

“Everyone is avoiding me like their scared of me. Clearly something happened.”

Crawford sighs and pinches the bridge of his nose. Crawford finally shakes his head.

“Something did happen, but it's best to forget about it.” He gives Will a stern look when he opens his mouth to object. “It has nothing to do with you now. You have officially been placed in the low zones, away from Dr. Lecter.”

“Dr. Lecter? What does he have to do with anything?” Will furrows his brows, confused. Crawford stares at Will in shock, mouth hanging open.

“What does he have—are you serious?” When Will continues to stare, Crawford shakes his head, his expression sympathetic. “You poor fool. You have no idea, do you?”

“No idea about what? Just tell me.” But Crawford turns away from him.

“The less you know, the better. You're not going back to the red zone; you won't have to see Lecter again. It's for your safety and everyone else in the prison.”

Will watches as Crawford storms off, frustrated and confused. What does Lecter have to do with anything? He was locked away in the red zone with a handful of other inmates.

Huffing, Will turns to leave as well when he spots a table of inmates looking at him. The oldest one beckons him closer, but Will learned his lesson and stayed put.

“Relax, Pup, I mean you no harm. Anyone would be suicidal to lay a hand on you.” the old inmate coaxes. Will tilts his head and his curiosity wins the better of him.

“What happened?” He asks, knowing full well they overheard his and Crawford's conversation.

“The next day after the incident in the yard,” The old inmate recalls. “Emerson—the one who attacked you—was found dead in his cell.”

Will flinches in surprise. A tattooed inmate speaks up. “Stabbed himself with a shank, he did. If yous was here, Pup, he wouldn't have had it. Yous are good about that, making sure wes don't have things we ain't supposed to.”

Will shakes his head, ignoring the inmate's attempt at flattery. “Why?” He hates being in the dark, his mind usually so good at putting the pieces together. “His sentence would have been extended, and he would've been sent to a higher section. There was no reason to--”

“Two days after Emerson's suicide,” A different inmate interrupts, head down. “Mason Verger was cornered by some of the gangs and beaten to an inch of his life. Hardly recognizable. He had to be sent to the hospital, and it's unlikely he'll be returning. Some of the boys overheard he was the one who sent Emerson on ya.”

Blood drains from Will's face as he takes in the information, suddenly feeling light headed. He couldn't understand it, why would Verger want to hurt him? He had just met the man. He had no reason to attack unless he got his kicks off the pain of others. Also, what did Lecter have to do with all of this?

Will's eyes dart around the floor of the cafeteria before a memory creeps up to the front of his mind.

I wonder what would happen... If I broke his new favorite.

Lecter had been standing in the opposite yard, far enough away to not be able to hear anything, but close enough to see the people inside. He had witnessed everything.

“I'm...” Hysteria bubbles in his chest as he gathers this new information. Now he understands the anxious behavior of the inmates whenever he nears them, now noticeable after the events in the yard. He understands why the young guards have stopped calling him names, why Lounds goes out of his way to either be nice or avoid Will at all cost. “I'm Lecter's favorite.” He wants to throw up.

“It's unbelievable Crawford thinks by not telling you he's protecting you. Your grave has already been dug, boy. Once Lecter gains interest, there's no escaping.”

“But it's not all bad though,” a different inmate speaks up, scratching at his face. “You're under his protection now. No one can hurt you.”

“Lecter may be sectioned off like a diseased animal, but he knows everything. It might take him a day or two, but he knows the ups and downs of this prison. Knows who's new, what gang you're part of, what brought you here, and he will use that knowledge to his advantage.”

“Not sure if yous knows this, Pup, but this prison here is corrupted,” the tattooed inmate says. “The Warden might look like he's in charge, but everyone knows Lecter runs the prison.”

Will is silent, trying to organize the information running loose in his head. How had he become Lecter's favorite? It's been two weeks since he started working in Lecter's zone. While it was enough time for interest to form, Will didn't think he would be important enough to where Lecter would threaten anyone who dared to lay a hand on him. He wasn't even interesting, barely giving the cannibal enough information to become intrigued.

However, a small voice preens under the attention. Lecter thinks he's interesting. Lecter thinks he's special.

Shaking his head in disgust, a new thought forms.

“Verger said I'm his favorite. His *new* favorite.” He dares to look up at the eyes of those around him, challenging anyone to correct him. “Who was the first? What happened to him?”

“Her,” the old inmate corrects. “His last favorite was a her.”

“I thought women weren't allowed to be guards here.” Will questions.

“She's the reason why we have the rule now.” the old inmate says, suddenly looking much older. “Officer Starling was her name. One of the best and brightest guards there ever graced this damned place. Kept everyone in line; there was no funny business when she was around. She was so headstrong and stubborn the Warden put her in charge of the red zone with Mr. Matthews. Figured if anyone could keep those dangerous men in line, it would be her.”

The old inmate pauses, rubbing his temples as if a great pressure where upon him. When he looks back up his eyes are shining. “I used to be in the red zone with Lecter; my cell was close to door, Lecter was further down, and Miggs next to him right at the end.”

At the mention of Miggs, several inmates shutter and look away. Will recalls the empty cell beside Lecter's.

“Everyday,” the old inmate recalls, a fond smile on his face. “Officer Starling would storm in, check on the inmates, and wait at her post. Everyday, Dr. Lecter would try and talk with her. Over the course of months she warmed up to Lecter, staying longer and longer by his cell instead of returning to her post. Word soon got out she was Lecter's favorite, thus making her untouchable. We all knew we didn't touch Lecter's possessions.”

A lull fell over the conversation, the old inmate looking tired and the others restless. Will is able to put the rest of the pieces together, his mind in a whirlwind.

“Miggs attacked her, didn't he?” When he fails to receive a response, he continues. “Miggs escaped from his cell and got her.”

“...It was terrible,” The old inmate whispers. “There was so much screaming. Poor girl never saw it coming. Oh, did she try. Didn't go down without a fight. Worse thing about it though was Lecter. I'd never heard him raise his voice or get visibly angry. But his *rage*, his fury. Miggs didn't stand a chance.”

“Lecter escaped from his own cell?”

“No. Lecter never left his cell. When the section was stabilized, Miggs recaptured and Officer Starling sent to the hospital, he was calm. Too calm. They should have known better than to send him back to his original cell once it was fixed. Should have known Lecter would have done something, no matter how long Miggs was in solitary. The day he was sent back to his cell was the day he was found dead after swallowing his own tongue.”

After a moment's pause, Will asks, “What happened to Officer Starling?”

The weighted silence is all Will needs to hear before he rushes out of the cafeteria.

--Day 16--

“You've got to be kidding me,” Crawford roars and Will would have rolled his eyes if he wasn't under the cold grip of fear. They stood in the Warden's office, Will trying to blend into his surroundings while Crawford got in Chilton's face. “He's only been back for three days and you want him to go back to the red zone? His superiors--”

“Are aware of the situation,” Chilton replies cooly. “The fact of the matter is after the incident from last week the other guards are too scared to go into the red zone.”

“They wouldn't be scared if you hired men who were actually trained for this sort of job.” Crawford counters back.

“Where's Barney?” Will inquires, drawing their attention. “I thought he was back from sick leave?”

“He is,” agrees the Warden. “But the fiasco has made it so most of the guards don't want to work it. Barney is already working more hours than he's supposed to, and when you start up the new shift you, too, will be working longer hours.”

“How long are we talking?” Will wonders, trepidation pouring into Will's being as he watches Chilton's blank face.

“You would start after Barney's shift at six in the evening and stay until three in the morning.”

“Are you serious?” Jack bellows. “He's injured. Make one of the other guards do it, or better yet, put Lecter in solitary.”

“That won't work, remember?” Chilton explains, his expression dark. “You of all people should remember what happened.”

Crawford was silent, glaring at the Warden's desk. Chilton took one last look at Crawford before turning to Will. “You don't need to come in until your shift. Best you get a good night's rest.”

--Day 17--

Barney smiles when he sees Will standing outside of the red zone, waiting for his shift to start. Will smiles back and accepts a hug without a fuss.

“Good to see ya, Graham,” Barney says, giving Will a look over. He frowns and shakes his head. “Man, he got you good.” Will shrugs, trying to put the event in the past. He doesn't want to think about the cause of his attack, nor does he want to think about the outcome of his attacker and Verger.

“How do you feel?” Will asks. “The surgery went okay?”

“Yes, I'm fit as can be. It was nice to have the past couple weeks off, but I'm glad to be back. Missed Lecter's annoying questions.” He laughs while rubbing at a spot on his stomach. “Wanted me to take my shirt off to see the scar. He should know better by now.”

Will snorts. “Who knew the doctor had a scar fetish?”

Barney chuckles and pats Will on the shoulder. “Don't worry about it. You shouldn't have too much of a problem tonight. The lights go out in the cells at 8pm, but Lecter's nocturnal so he might be awake until your shift ends.” Barney gives Will one more pat before beginning to walk down the hall. He pauses before he can get too far, an unreadable expression on his face. “You remember what I said about Lecter?”

Will nods.

“With everything that's happened it'll be harder to ignore him. Don't give him any details about yourself, Graham, and whatever you do, *don't* become attached.”

“Is that what happened to Officer Starling? Did she get too attached?”

Barney winces. “I don't know how you got into this,” he evades. “but remember what I told you.” He gives Will one last stern look before walking away. Will stands before the open doors, his thoughts on the words of Barney and the old inmate, and of unfortunate Starling.

“It is so good to see you, Officer Graham,” Lecter greets, a smile playing at the corners of his lips. Will shuffles to his cell, maintaining the distance he usually held. Lecter tsks when he sees his arm in a sling, eyes moving up to the shoulder. “Has your recovery been set back?”

Will gives him a look, but he relents. “Because of the fight, I am going to be “recuperating” at the prison for a few more months.” Will tries not to notice how Lecter's eyes dance at the promise of future visits from the weary officer.

“I'm sure you won't find anymore trouble during your recovery.” Lecter reassures, but Will catches the darkness lurking. Lecter continues to talk, but Will's mind runs away, remembering conversations with the old inmate and Barney. Everything Lecter does is to his own gain. He doesn't care about anyone; he doesn't care about Will.

Officer Starling comes to mind, and Will strangely feels angry. A replacement. That's all he is. He should be glad Lecter's only using him to remember his first favorite, but he can't help but feel rejected. He tries to push it to the back of his mind, but as he continues to listen to the cannibal, his anger grows and grows. Finally, he can't contain it.

“Why?”

Lecter pauses, his expression unreadable.

“Why what, Officer Graham? You need to be more specific.”

Will grits his teeth in aggravation, roughly pulling at his hair with his free hand. Lecter frowns in disapproval.

“Why did you pick me?” he exclaims, now pacing in circles in front of the cell. “I've done nothing to encourage you. Hell, I haven't had a conversation with you for almost a week.”

“Language, Officer Graham.” Lecter warns, but Will is too far into his own thoughts to listen.

“From the first day you successfully put an end to Lound's name calling, I haven't heard anyone call me “bitch” since I've started working in this zone, and now everyone is afraid to come near me.” Will gives another tug at his hair before dropping his hand, turning his back to Lecter. Quiet descends upon them as Will catches his breath, his anger gone. He rubs at his face before taking a deep breath.

“I refuse to play this game, Dr. Lecter. I'm not your play thing, I'm not for your amusement while here, and,” Will turns around, looking the man straight in the eye. “I won't be a replacement.”

Will wishes there was bite to his declaration, but it comes out pitiful, hurt. Will breaks eye contact, hurt once again at his own actions. He tries to escape to this post, but Lecter doesn't let him.

“You are not a replacement, Officer Graham.” he scolds, but his voice is soft and inviting. Will cannot help but be called back to his cell. “No one can replace my Starling.”

Lecter closes his eyes, and Will has a moment of yearning to come closer. He shakes it off by the time the man's eyes open. “No, Officer Graham, you are not a replacement. You and Starling are on two different pedestals. Both equally important, but not the same. However, you do remind me of her.”

“From what I heard, we seem like completely different people.” Will remarks, remembering the old inmate's tale of a fiery, stubborn woman. Lecter chuckles.

“You both have a sense of duty and ethics. Also, you are both terribly stubborn. It took me three weeks for my Starling to warm up to me. You, on the other hand,” Lecter grins, his maroon eyes glinting in the florescent lighting. “it appears only to have taken me a couple days.”

Will steps back, heat rushing to his face. “I have no idea what your taking about.”

“As for why I picked you.” He continues, hands folded behind his back. “You are different from the other vermin that run around the halls. That's one point for you. The other was your fearlessness. Oh, you were scared of me. Still are, in fact. I can smell it on you. You didn't want to be here, wanted to far, far away. But you weren't afraid to stand up to me, to ignore my inquiries. I decided then and there you were to be mine.”

Will swallows, the look Lecter gives him making him want to squirm. The old thought comes again, making him want to draw closer to this powerful man. He holds his ground, but he cannot make himself look at the man. His thoughts rumble, crashing into one another. What could he do about this? Just let the man do as he pleases? Nothing will change if he continues to ignore Lecter. The guards and inmates will still be afraid of him. He has no one to turn to other than Crawford and Barney, and he rarely sees them as it is. Fighting his new circumstance will leave him stressed and lonely.

On the other hand, if Will gives in and willingly takes up conversation with Lecter he'll have someone to talk to, someone to have intellectual conversations with on a daily basis. He doesn't have any friends outside of work, and he was lonely. Besides, he is only staying for a few more months and then he never has to set foot in the prison ever again. He has already decided he's going to turn in his badge. He'll quit the force, move south where it's sunny, and work on boats.

Making a decision, Will lets out a sigh.

“William.”

He hears Lecter's intake, his body ridged. Will makes himself look up at Lecter's face, finding the man staring at him with an intense expression.

“My name is William Graham, but I prefer Will.”

Lecter closes his eyes, a look of pleasure running through his face. When he opens them Will thinks he can see something sparkling in the man's eyes, but it quickly disappears.

“Thank-you, William,” Lecter purrs and Will shivers. “I do hope this means we can drop all formalities.”

Will glances away, but he answers hesitantly. “If you wish... Hannibal.”

Dr. Lecter smiles, and Will cannot help but smile back.

Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

--Day 18--

“I didn't know you wore glasses, Will.” Hannibal notes, his gaze fixed on the spectacles perched upon the guard's nose. Will readjusts his glasses, pushing them higher onto his face. He loves his glasses, loves the security they bring him when he talks to others. However, he always wore contacts when working as an officer and now as a guard. Glasses were just too fragile, and if he got into a fight they could have gotten into his eyes, blinding him or leaving him to fight an assailant with blurry vision. Now, with Hannibal's protection he felt it was safe enough to go around wearing them. Plus, he is still suffering from a ruptured blood vessel, and working nights with contacts proved to be a bad idea.

The first night had started off well. After it was established Will was going to accept Hannibal's protection the two fell into easy conversation. It helped pass the first few hours. However, as the night wore on Will became drowsier and drowsier. He accidentally rubbed his bad eye, hissing as the contact rubbed against his raw nerves.

“What's wrong?” Hannibal had asked. Will waved him off, saying it was nothing. He briefly turned away to blink rapidly, trying to soothe the eye without doing any further damage. If Hannibal had noticed his eye was more glassy than before he didn't mention it.

Now Hannibal looks at his face in interest, motioning Will to come closer. He does, but not too close. They may have an agreement now, but Will still doesn't feel comfortable getting too close. Hannibal continued to look before he chuckled.

“What?” Will asks, immediately readjusting his glasses. Hannibal waves his hand.

“Nothing, it's just that now you are going to have a harder time with inmates calling you Pup if you wear those.”

Will's face stubbornly lights up and he continues to play with his glasses. “You know you could maybe get word out so they can stop doing that.”

“Oh no,” Hannibal grins. “Why would I do that? It is such a fitting name, William. If they must call you something other than your title, then I would rather it be Pup than something else.”

Hannibal continues to smile while Will's face refuses to cool down.

It is only midnight, Will thinks, *I can last*.

He stands near the door, his head starting to feel heavy. A nine hour shift is too much, even if he is allowed a break. Every three hours he is permitted to leave the red zone for fifteen minutes to go to the restroom, and to get a snack and water. He had just come back from his break and did a quick round. Hannibal was waiting for him, but they didn't talk for long. With the lights out most of the other inmates were sleeping, and while talking with Hannibal distracted him from his drowsy state, he didn't want to disturb the others. So after a quick hello he went back to his post, but was soon regretting it.

Holding back a yawn, Will sways before putting his full weight against the wall. Maybe if he just closes his eyes for a moment. With the inmates sleeping and there being no chances of Lecter escaping from his cell, Will allows himself to shut his eyes.

Tap. Tap. Tap.

“Officer Graham?” a voice calls out.

Will groans, but doesn't react. The tapping continues, louder this time.

“Officer Graham, are you alright?” the voice asks.

Another voice pipes up, “He's just sleeping, doc, but he won't wake up.”

Will suddenly becomes aware of his surroundings and jolts upward. He is no longer standing, instead he is slumped against the floor. Will doesn't even remember falling asleep, let alone sitting on the floor. Will tries to get a handle of his situation before a horrid thought comes over him.

Oh no. Did I sleep walk?

Will jumps to his feet, groaning again as his vision momentarily blackens.

“Are you alright, Officer Graham?” one of the inmates asks, one Will remembers always ignoring him. Will nods, trying to regain his sight.

“Well, you better get down to the Doctor's cell. He's been calling.”

Will nods, but doesn't move. Quietly, so Hannibal doesn't hear even though he's cells down, Will asks, “Did I do anything in my sleep?”

Will cannot make out the inmate in the darkness, but the man laughs.

“Best you ask the Doctor, Officer Graham.”

That is a yes if he had ever heard one. Rubbing his face and trying not to fret, Will walks to Lecter's cell.

The man is standing next to the glass when he arrives, but Will cannot see him clearly. Instead he sees his own reflection, and just about groans again. His hair is a mess, and there

are red lines against his face from where it was pressed against his arm. His clothes, thank God, are still intact and not rumpled. Despite the angle he must have been sleeping at, his shoulder didn't hurt one bit, which also meant he didn't try to scratch it in his sleep. Will runs his hand through his hair, and Hannibal chuckles.

“I never would have thought you were prone to sleep walking, William.” He says, and Will catches a glint of his maroon eyes.

“I-yes, I do sleep walk, but I haven't done it in a long time.” he states, still trying to fix his hair. While it is not a lie, he still feels uncomfortable at the intensity Hannibal is watching him.

“Do you know why?” Hannibal asks.

Will shrugs. “I used to sleep walk a lot as a kid. Gave my parents a fright more than I'd like to admit.” he snorts, looking down at the floor. “Now? Now I think it's because of stress.”

“Why are you stressed, Will?” Hannibal asks, and Will can hear the hint of curiosity and small traces of worry. “Has someone been bothering you?”

Will nearly rolls his eyes. “I work in a prison, Hannibal, of course I'm stressed.”

He can barely make out the frown marring the doctor's features, and he add, “But I'm sure it'll lift in a few days. The only stress factor in my life now is Chilton.”

Hannibal didn't respond. Will makes one last attempt at fixing his hair before giving a small wave.

“If there is nothing else, I'll be returning to my--”

“Are you still tired?” Hannibal interrupts, and Will pauses.

“Um, yes, but I can stay awake for--”

“If you are tired you should take a nap,” Hannibal interjects one more time. “However, I would be pleased if you did so here where I can keep an eye on you.”

Will opened his mouth to object, but a yawn escapes instead, and he can just make out the outlines of a smile in the darkness.

“Thank-you, Hannibal, but I'll be fine for the rest of the night.”

Besides, he thinks, I wouldn't be able to sleep with you watching anyway.

“Very well,” Hannibal relents. “But if I see you sleep walking again, I'll have to insist on you staying here.”

Will laughs nervously, before returning to his post.

He manages to stay awake the entire night.

--Day 20--

“Do you own any pets, Will?” Hannibal asks as Will walks by.

“You've asked me that before.” Will replies.

“I never received an answer.” Hannibal counters.

Will falls silent, remembering he was giving the cannibal the silent treatment when he asked the first time. He nearly apologizes, remembering he did nothing wrong.

“I don't,” Will admits after a time, eyes wandering down the hall. “With my job and my current home it wouldn't work out for me to have an animal in my life, whether it be a cat or fish.”

“But if you were to own a pet,” Hannibal pushes. “What would you pick?”

“A dog,” Will answers immediately. “I would get a dog. Maybe a couple dogs.” Will smiles wistfully. “I would get some land in the country where they could roam, maybe somewhere by the ocean. Probably down south.”

Will is brought out of his thoughts from Hannibal's light laughter, and he turns to see the man is watching him with an amused expression.

“...What?”

“Nothing, nothing.” Hannibal assures, but the smile is still on his face. Will glares, but it just makes the maroon-eyed man smile more. “It's just there will be no escaping from your nickname now, Pup.” Hannibal adds for good measure, and Will can't resist rubbing his face in frustration. When he finds out who gave him that name he swears...

“Yeah, well they all better enjoy it while they can, because I'm leaving as soon as my shoulder is better and when my superiors say I can leave.”

Hannibal's face twitches, and Will's been around the man to know he's displeased. “I can't convince you to stay here?” the cannibal asks. “The prison guard must pay more than a measly cop's salary.”

Will tries to push away the strange feeling in his stomach at Lecter's words, wondering at the underlying meaning behind them. Instead, he answers with: “No, you can't. I think I'm done with working with criminals. They only seem to bring me trouble.” Will begins to rub his shoulder as he talks. While the wound isn't acting up, it still is a reminder of his failure to pay attention to his surroundings. Hannibal shoots him a disapproving look, and Will drops his hand immediately.

“Why did you become a cop in the first place?”

“...I wanted to help people,” Will answers honestly, daring to look Hannibal straight in the eyes. It lasts longer than usual with his glasses acting as a barrier, but he still averts his gaze after a few blinks. “But all I seem to do is mess things up.”

Hannibal frowns and shakes his head. “You must be good at your job if your superiors are unwilling to let you go,” he argues, calmly pacing his cell. Will gives a shrug, not wanting to argue. It's only seven-thirty, and the lights are going to be turned off in another half hour. He slept well before he came to the prison, but Will can feel a mist of drowsiness beginning to fall over him. He stifles a yawn, and Hannibal's keen eyes catches it.

“Did you not sleep well, Will?”

Will shakes his head. “No, I slept fine. I don't know what it is, but every time I come here I feel... sleepy.” Will's voice cracks as he tries to hold back another yawn. Hannibal gives him a fond look before pointing at the wall behind the officer.

“Please, rest. I'll wake you if you begin to sleepwalk.”

Will's tempted, he really is, but he shakes his head.

“Maybe some other time,” he declines, and begins to walk back to his post. “You should to get to bed early. It isn't healthy to stay up so late.”

Ever since Will started the night shift, Hannibal stayed awake up until Will left for home, bidding the officer a good night with pleasant dreams. Will tried to get the other to sleep, not wanting to make the other stay up on his behalf, but Hannibal was amused by his intentions.

“I'll be fine, William.” Hannibal responds with a playful smile. “However, I grow more and more concerned for your health with these new arrangements. Tell me, are you scheduled for a day off any time soon?”

“Well, I used to have Sundays off, but now with the new shift I don't know. Chilton didn't have it written down.” Will's brows furrow. “Why?”

“Have you ever tried dabbing your pillow with lavender oil?” Hannibal ignores Will's question, asking his own instead. Will merely blinks at Hannibal, prompting the other man to continue. “Lavender has qualities in it that helps soothe and calm. When dealing with patients with high anxiety, I would spray lavender in the room before their appointment, so when they arrived they would be relaxed for our sessions.” Hannibal moves to sit at his desk, an indicator Will quickly learned the second night meant he was done with the conversation. “You should try it the next time you go to sleep.”

“Right,” Will yawns. “I'll try and remember to grab some lavender extract next time I'm at the store.”

As Will walks back to his post, he can hear Hannibal's voice softly carrying toward him. “And remember to ask Chilton when you get your next day off. I worry about your health, dear Will.”

--Day 23--

Will arrives at the prison earlier than he anticipated and decides to see if Jack is free. However, he cannot find the older guard, and the others do not know where he is either.

Puzzled, Will tries to put it aside as he leaves the locker rooms, but a voice calls to him. Turning, Will watches as Chilton draws near him, and he tries to keep from frowning.

“Officer Graham. Just the person I was hoping to catch. Do you have a minute?”

“A few.” Will confirms, but he wishes he had lied to avoid talking to the Warden. Chilton smiles and motions for Will to follow him to his office. Will hopes the man isn't going to give him more shifts; he already had enough on his plate. The red zone wasn't difficult since he decided to be “friends” with Dr. Lecter, but they were long and tiring. If only they could be cut, or perhaps let him have a half hour break to take a nap. Will doubted he would be in much luck as the Warden sat at his desk, Will sitting across from him.

“How's the shoulder, Will?” Chilton asks.

Will nearly narrows his eyes at the use of his first name. He doesn't like Chilton using it as if they are friends. Only Dr. Lecter is allowed that privilege. Will nearly slaps himself as that thought runs though his mind. Hannibal – Dr. Lecter – is only a means to pass the time and gain a sense of protection for the duration of his stay as a guard. He will never see the man again once he gets the okay to leave.

But that didn't stop his heart to speed up every time the criminal uses his first name, drawing him into conversation or to gain his attention. Will wonders briefly what Hannibal would do if the pane of glass didn't separate them. Would he try to eat him? Bite his face off as he did with the nurse? Or perhaps his bites would render his neck raw, further marking him as property of Dr. Hannibal Lecter, the true ruler of the prison.

Will runs his hands over his face, quickly stalling the thought process and giving Chilton his full attention. “Fine. It's fine. Is there something I can help you with, Warden?”

“There is,” The Warden begins with a sigh. “Jack Crawford is on leave for a few days. Apparently his wife isn't doing well.”

Will's heart pangs in sympathy, but quickly notes the indifferent, near callous way Chilton delivers the information. He bites any words that might slip through in order to hear the rest of the Warden's sentence. “I'm changing your shift again-” Will makes a face, which Chilton ignores. “And you will be back to working both the low levels and the red zone.”

“I can't work that many hours, Warden. I nearly fell asleep a few day--”

“I believe you did fall asleep,” Chilton corrects, and Will's face pales. “Have it all on camera. I never would have taken you for a sleep walker, Graham.”

Will stubbornly stares down at his lap, face pulled into a scowl. Chilton continues. “Since you are doing well, and since it seems the prisoners are scared of you now,” Will's head snaps up at that, but he is ignored. “There should be no problem with you working a double shift.”

Will opened his mouth to object, but closes it with a snap when at Chilton's look. The two stare at one another before Will relents and looks back down.

“When do I start?”

“On Wednesday,” Chilton stands and grabs a file. “I'm letting you have the next two days off until then to catch up on sleep. I don't want another incident like a few days ago.”

“I thought we were understaffed?” Will manages to ask, and Chilton waves him off.

“Since things have died down most of the guards have come back. Don't worry about it.” Chilton glances up at the clock, before returning to the file in his hand. “Your shift is about to start. Don't want to keep Dr. Lecter waiting.”

Will glares at the Warden before standing.

“Have a good night, Officer Graham.” Chilton calls after him.

“Good night, Warden.”

Hannibal's face is blank when Will tells him of his schedule change, but Will knows better. The older man's eyes seem to flash against the harsh lighting, momentarily giving them a murderous glint. Will is thankful—not for the first time—whatever Hannibal is thinking about is not directed at him. He waits until the doctor has his thoughts gathered, knowing he has something to say on the matter. After a moment, Hannibal sighs and shakes his head.

“It can't be helped, it seems.” He laments, turning away. Will thinks for a moment Hannibal is going to sit at his desk, but instead the man sits at the edge of his bed.

This is new, Will thinks as the cannibal steeples his fingers and places them under his chin. His expression still blank, Hannibal asks, “Did you by any chance remember to ask Chilton when you get a day off? Did you also take my advice about the lavender?”

“Yes, but I think I over did it,” Will's nose wrinkles at the memory when he first dabbled the extract on his pillow. At first he didn't smell anything, but then the smell hit him all at once, making it nearly impossible to get any sleep. After a few minutes though his nose adjusted and he was able to nod off almost immediately. “Next time I'll use a lesser dosage.”

Hannibal's blank mask breaks into a smile, the corners of his eyes crinkling in delight.

“I should have warned you, but I'm glad you slept well. Now, about Chilton?”

Will blinks. “Oh. Yes. He said I get the next two days off; I come back on Wednesday.” Will pauses. Something seems... Strange. It comes to Will's attention Hannibal has been almost adamant about knowing when Will gets a day off. It's very suspicious. Narrowing his eyes, Will tilts his head and examines Hannibal. The man, while it didn't show, is anxious, calculating.

He meets Hannibal's gaze and does not look away. It seems to startle the other man, his mask slipping back on. “What is it, Will?”

Will ignores the way his body reacts to being called by his first name and swallows. “Nothing. Nothing at all. Why do you want to know when I have a day off?”

“I told you, Will. I'm concerned for your health. Even though you say you feel well, I can tell standing for hours is not doing you any favors. If I recall, you injured your leg during your brush with Emerson.”

“It was just bruised,” Will argues, folding his arms over his chest. “Your concern for my health is almost to an extreme.”

Hannibal looks offended and quickly stands, nearly making Will jump. Hannibal walks as close to the glass as he can, and Will wonders if he might place his hands on it, but the doctor keeps them at his side.

“Need I remind you, William, that you are under my protection. I take care of what's mine, whether they like it or not.” Hannibal narrows his eyes, but there isn't any malice behind the look. “If I had my way, Will, I would take hold of you, drag you to bed, and tie you there until I deemed you well enough to leave.” Lecter's voice is a dangerous growl, and Will's body reacts accordingly. He swallows and tries to drop his gaze, but Hannibal's sharp disapproval makes him look back up. “Once I have you secured to the bed, I can check over your injuries. Starting with your shoulder.” Hannibal points, and Will restrains himself from bringing a hand up to grasp the shoulder, shielding it from Lecter's scrutiny. “You say its fine, that its improving, but I catch you rubbing and scratching it. After I ensure your shoulder is truly fine, I'll give you a body examination. I have a feeling you aren't telling me the truth about the injuries you received at the hands of Emerson. And after that,”

Hannibal takes in Will's flushed appearance, and Will tries once again to look away. When he finds he cannot under his own violation, and Hannibal smiles knowingly he knows he's done in.

“After that I'll hold you. Not tightly, of course, since you'll be tied to the bed. I'll hold you close and keep an eye on you. You might not be able to fall asleep right away, therefore I'll help soothe you and you'll have no choice in the matter. In this arrangement you won't be able to sleep walk, which will benefit both of us. I'll admit, you gave me a scare a couple days ago.”

If Will didn't feel flustered he would have felt guilty for making Hannibal worry. He shuffles uncomfortably, wishing desperately to be able to look away. Hannibal continues to smile before turning away, breaking the spell. Will immediately looks down and brings his hand to his face and neck. The skin is hot. He clears his throat, trying to connect his brain with this mouth.

“Well. Th-thanks for the concern,” Will manages to get out, watching as Hannibal's smile grows. “I'll make sure to get plenty of sleep. Shouldn't be a problem.” Will starts to head back to his post, wishing he had this conversation closer to the end of his shift instead at the start. Now it will be awkward each time he comes to check on the inmates.

“See to it that you do,” Hannibal cautions, sitting back down on his bed and pulling out a book. It was recently granted to him, but he refused to say what it was. Every time Will tries

to catch a glimpse of the title Hannibal would put it away. “I expect the bags under your eyes to be lifted.”

“I don't have bags.” Will argues, but Hannibal is already reading and turning out his outburst. Will huffs and storms away. As he stands at his post, he catches the eye of the inmate in the first cell smiling at him.

“...What?”

The inmate shakes his head. “Nuthin',” he says, but soon chuckles. “Better be careful if he ever gets out, Pup. He'll never let you go.”

Will's face flames up and he fixes his gaze down the hall.

As three o' clock draws near, Hannibal's earlier anxious behavior returns. He constantly asks Will questions and offers him suggestions for what he should do during his days off. They range from fishing (Hannibal remembered Will mentioning he enjoyed fishing when he got the time) to reading a good book. However, he was adamant that Will got plenty of sleep. He worried so dearly about his health.

Will tries to put it past him, but he can't shake the strange feeling. It is similar to when he faced against Emerson and talked with Verger. Something is off, but Lecter is so cool about it. As anxious as he seems, he is collected and smooth. Whenever the anxious behavior pops up or is exposed, Hannibal jumps subjects or asks Will a question, effectively distracting the officer from becoming curious.

Fifteen minutes before his shift ends, Will asks, “are you sure you're okay?” Will looks him over and frowns. “Have you been getting enough sleep?”

Hannibal laughs and ducks his head slightly. The action throws Will off. It was unexpected; it made Hannibal seem more... Human.

“I'll admit since you've been here I have gotten less than I usually get, but I assure you I am not suffering. Talking with you is better than sleeping.”

“I doubt that” Will mutters, earning a playful scowl from Hannibal.

“I'm not lying.” Hannibal says.

“Yeah, yeah.” Will mutters, looking at his watch. He has four minutes left.

“Will.”

Will looks up and is captured in Hannibal's gaze.

“Take care of yourself. I will be disappointed if you come back on Wednesday exhausted.”

“I work a double shift, Hannibal. I'm going to be exhausted anyway.” Will reminds him.

“Promise me, William.”

Will sighs and rolls his eyes. “Fine. But,” he points an accusing finger at the other man. “If I have to rest so do you.”

Hannibal blinks before laughing. “My dear Will. As flattered as I am at your concern, all I do in my “home” is rest. I fear I'm not up to my usual standards and strength, for they refuse to let me work out, you know. Just the occasional walk in the court yard.”

Will knew part of that is a lie, for he has caught Lecter doing pushups and curls in his cell, but he knows the man is referring to the weights that are kept under heavy watch. Not that he needed them. He managed to retain his his lean figure, and Will didn't doubt the man could still do some serious damage given the chance.

“Have a good night, Dr. Lecter.” Will bids him.

“Will, we've talked about this,” Hannibal gently scolds. “Please call me by my first name.”

“Fine. Have a good night, *Hannibal*.”

Hannibal smiles and nods his head. “Have a good night, Will. Pleasant dreams.”

The door opens, permitting the new guard to enter and allowing Will to leave.

“Hey, Officer Graham,” the guard greets, but his tone suggests he's only doing it to be civil. That, and Hannibal is most likely listening. “Anything eventful happen tonight?”

Will's reminded of Hannibal's strange behavior, and opens his mouth to make a comment on it, but he pauses. For some reasons, while it was noticeable and different, there wasn't any reason to report it. Hannibal was his usual self, and he did mention he hadn't been sleeping regularly. He could have told Will it was nothing so he didn't worry.

At the last minute, Will responds with “nope, nothing to worry about.”

As he leaves, his stomach churns and he can't help but wonder if he did the right thing.

--Day 24--

As soon as Will gets home he crashes on his bed and doesn't get up until noon. After that, he simply stays in bed, listening to music and looking through boating magazines he occasionally picks up at the store. It feels strange, not having to go to work today or tomorrow, and Will knows this break will throw him off. It'll be harder to drag himself to work on Wednesday, but for now he relishes in the sun, taking Hannibal's advice and falling back to sleep only after a couple of hours. When he finally gets up, he makes some food and turns on the tv, catching an episode of some cop series. There's too many for him to keep track of.

The time is creeping toward six o' clock when his phone rings. Will chooses to ignore it. It's probably just a telemarketer or electronic message telling him how he could win money. The phone stops, but soon starts up again. Will finally looks up from where he's making dinner,

frowning. Who would be calling him? It can't be work; he had the day off. Then again, Chilton is a fickle man and constantly changing his mind on matters. Hoping it isn't the prison, Will reluctantly picks up.

“Hello?”

“Officer Graham?” Will nearly groans. It's Chilton.

“Can I help you, Warden?” Will tries to stay pleasant, turning down the burner so his meal won't be ruined.

“I know I said you could get the day off today and tomorrow, but some things have come up.”

“Some things.” Will repeats, a slight growl to his voice.

“Yes. Today a small fight broke out in the cafeteria, and a few of the guards were injured, Mr. Matthews included.”

Will jerks. “Is Barney okay?”

“He's fine, but his stitches were reopened and he was sent to the hospital. He won't be able to return until Wednesday. Everything is under control now, but I need you to come in as soon as possible to take up some of the shifts.”

“Warden Chilton--”

“This cannot be adjusted, Officer Graham.” Chilton interrupts. “I need you to be here. Even with your injury, you are the most qualified guard. Plus, no one would dare cause a fuss with you there.”

Will is silent. The Warden has a point. With Hannibal's protection none of the other inmates wouldn't chance hurting him. With a regretful sigh, Will agrees.

“I'll be there as soon as I can.”

Hanging up and putting his unfinished meal in the fridge, Will goes to get his uniform. As he steps out the door, Will forgets to grab his pain medication.

As soon as he arrives, Will knows something is wrong. The other guards are on alert and anxious. He catches Lounds' eye and the other man motions him over.

“What's going on?” Will asks, but Lounds and a few who were listening just shake their heads.

“We don't know. The cafeteria was put under lockdown a few hours ago, but nothing's changed. They took some of the guards to the hospital, but we haven't heard anything since.”

“The Warden hasn't told us anything.” One of the younger guards says, and Will can see he's clearly shaking. “There's been word of a break out, but otherwise...”

“Any ideas of who's broken out?” Will inquires, but every one shakes their heads.

Will stands with the guards before seeking out the Warden. Chilton is talking with a few older guards, barking out orders.

“So you call this under control? I'd hate to see when Hell breaks loose.” Will mutters, and Chilton sighs.

“It is,” He says sternly, but Will can tell the man is worried.

“There's talk of a break out,” Will pushes. “Who started the fight?”

Chilton's face screws into a sneer, but he refuses to say.

“Are there still inmates in the cafeteria?” Will asks instead.

“...Yes, there are.” the Warden finally relents. “One of the gangs decided today was the perfect day to start a war. We've locked them in the cafeteria for now. They haven't tried to get out, yet, but tensions are rising. I need someone to go in there and try and defuse the situation.”

Will gives Chilton an incredulous look. “You better not be implying what I think you are, Warden.” Chilton is silent, and Will begins to laugh. “Are you serious? I'm *injured*, Chilton. I can't use my right arm. What's stopping these inmates from killing me? Dr. Lecter?” Will scoffs, hysteria bubbling up. “The man is locked away three floors up. By the time he can do anything I'll be cooling in the morgue.”

“You are all I have to keep this from exploding.” Chilton finally says, but Will shakes his head.

“This is beyond me, Warden. You need to call someone higher to handle the situation, not some broken guard who happened to catch the eye of the most powerful criminal in this abominable place.”

Chilton opens his mouth to argue, but there is a sudden shout.

“One of them's escaped,” one of the guards shouts, and boots thunder down the hall. Will rushes to the scene, but instead is greeted by a group of guards trying to break down a door. The door has no markings or indications that it is important, but the guards are freaking out in their attempts to open it.

“What's in that room?” Will asks, fear starting to trickle into his being.

“The control panel for the entire God damn prison,” one of the guards grunts as he tries to open the door. Will whirls on Chilton, who had followed him.

“You keep a control panel for the prison *here*?”

“It's not so much as a control panel,” another guard pipes up. “It's where the two breakers are located. If one is out, then it's no problem. But if they are both out...”

“Each level is closed off with electronic doors. If the breakers go out then they will be open.” Lounds finishes.

“But the cells themselves are locked manually,” Will argues. “They need a key to unlock them.” He casts a worried look around him, “Right?”

“Right, but the master key is missing.”

Will pales. “Which means...”

“The inmates might be loose in their sections.” Chilton moves away from the group, flipping open his cellphone. At that moment, the lights go out.

The guards stop, and everyone falls silent. In the distance, Will can hear hundreds of doors sliding open.

“We need to get out of here.” one of the guards shout. “We'll all be dead within minutes.”

The panic which had been bubbling spills over the instant the guard spoke. Anyone who is in the area scrabbles, scattering in different directions. Most, however, manage to run in the direction of the entrance. In the commotion Will is bumped from behind and loses his balance, causing him to fall on his injured shoulder.

“Graham!” one of the guards grabs his good arm, trying to haul him to his feet, but Lounds stops him.

“Leave him behind! We don't have time.”

“But Freddy--”

“I said leave him. He's their bitch, remember?”

Will tries to stand, but his vision blurs do to the pain, and he is left alone to struggle on the floor. He doesn't know how much time has passed, but other pairs of feet run past him. Even in the dark Will can see they are inmates. They disappear around the corridor as well, but they reappear after a short while.

“Damn, they managed to lock the doors.” One of the inmates complains, his hand going to a walkie-talkie on his hip. “Any luck with the other doors?”

Will can't hear the reply, but the inmate's reaction tells him it is a negative one. The inmate groans, but stops once he sets his sight on Will.

“Well, well. Looks like we caught ourselves a guard,” He says, and he grabs Will by his free arm and yanks him up. Another pair of hands grab him, jostling his injured shoulder, and Will cries out.

“Wait, hold up,” says the other inmate, and Will can feel him running his hand over his right arm, coming in contact with the sling. He gasps. “Oh shit, oh shit! It's Officer Graham!”

“What?” the other inmate pauses in dragging Will and another hand is placed on his sling. Will whimpers in pain. “Oh shit.”

“What's he doing here? He's not supposed to be here”

“Shut up I know.” The other inmate growls. They stand in the dark, the inmates muttering to one another. Will tries to keep up, but his shoulder throbs rhythmically with his heartbeat. He groans again, feeling a headache fall upon him.

“We stick to the plan,” the first inmate says, and this time when he pulls Will it is with caution. The other inmate wraps an arm around Will's waist to avoid touching his right arm.

“But we can't get out.” The other inmate protests.

“We stick to the plan.” repeats the first inmate. “And take Pup to the cafeteria.”

The lights were out in the cafeteria too, but some of the inmates had gotten a hold of flashlights. When the three entered, the lights were positioned on them. A few laugh and cheer as they see the inmates bring their prisoner, but soon stop when they catch sight of the guard's face. Will hears hushed whispers spread through the cafeteria, but his name is the only thing he can hear. He is placed in a chair, but no one ties him up. They all back away, looking to one another. Will brings his hand to his face, brushing his hair away from his forehead. The cooling system must have also been attached to the breakers, for Will's sweating. The inmates are also sweating, it seems.

“Could I get some water?” Will asks in a hushed tone, half hoping no one heard him. In minutes the inmate with a tattoo on his face is holding out a plastic cup, and Will thanks him.

“What are wes gonna do?” the tattooed inmate ask, and another shakes his head.

“I don't know.”

Suddenly, the cafeteria doors slam open and all the flashlights are trained on the newcomer. He's an inmate Will's never seen before.

“What's going on here?” The inmate asks, and his dark gaze is trained on Will.

“There must be another breaker that controls the outside doors,” an inmate says. “Otherwise there was an emergency code set to lock all the doors if both of the breakers break after a little while.”

“Anyone know if anyone got out?” someone asks.

“Yeah, some of the guys up on the first and second floor got out, but the doors locked a few minutes after.

“Well, somebody better go look into it.” The new inmate snaps, and a couple inmates flee from the cafeteria. The man walks closer to Will, and Will does his best not to flinch. “Why does this guard have a cup?” Before Will can open his mouth, the cup of water is slapped from his hands. The man then grabs Will and throws him out of his chair. In the fall, Will's glasses fly off into the darkness.

“Budge, don't.” An inmate shouts, fear evident in his voice. “That's Pup.”

“Who?” Budge, Tobias Budge Will puts together, asks. Will tries to curl away, but Budge grips him firmly by the hair.

“Pup,” the inmate motions to Will. “Officer Graham. he's protected.”

“Oh yeah? By who?”

“Dr. Lecter,” is the frightened reply.

“That bag of bones is still alive?” Budge asks with a cruel laugh. “I thought they sent him to the chair weeks ago.”

“Stuff's happened since yous been in solitary.” The tattooed inmate says, but Budge scoffs. “You weren't here the last time something happened to his favorite. Let Pup go.”

Budge does the opposite, digging his fingers deeper into Will's scalp. “I don't care whose pet this is. He should be with the others.”

“Others?” Will whispers, earning him a hard punch.

“Quiet! My group caught a bunch of them trying to escape down the fire escape. It appears they were trapped in here like us. The Tooth Fairy is keeping an eye on them. What do you say, boys.” Will watches Budge takes something out of his pocket, but he cannot see clearly. “Maybe we should send them a souvenir.”

Something sharp is thrust against his neck, pain blossoming as blood runs down onto the floor.

The other inmates begin to freak, shouting for Budge to stop, but he ignores them. Will waits for the blade to sink deeper into his neck, but someone is rushing up beside them, knocking Budge away. Will is left dazed in the dark as the inmate with the tattoo and Budge fight, trying to calm his breathing. He hurries to put a hand to the wound, probing to see how deep the damage is. The gash doesn't feel deep, but he has to stop the bleeding. He sits up to bring the wound above his heart. He manages to stand, only to be manhandled back to the floor. Budge is back over him, but his knife is missing. Gritting his teeth Will tries to fight back, but Budge slams his fist into his shoulder, and Will screams.

Suddenly, Budge is gone, and Will is pulled to his feet. The pain is so severe Will's knees buckle under his weight, but the body holding him is strong and firm. Will can feel the muscles working under the blue garb as he is picked up in a bridal carry. He whimpers, but falls silent as he is carried away. Without thinking, he buries his face into the man's shoulder,

trying to ignore the pain running through his body. Budge yells something, but Will cannot hear it over the commotion of the other inmates. He catches someone say “Just let him take him”, but after that everything is garbled, loud noise until the cafeteria doors close behind them. Now, Will can only hear his loud, erratic breathing, and when he tries to stop it a sob comes out instead.

“Shh, William, shh.” the man soothes, and Will nearly jumps out of his arms when he hears his voice. He wouldn't have been able to misplace it in the world.

“H-hannibal.” Will whimpers, squirming in his hold. Hannibal gently squeezes Will, making him gasp in discomfort and stop his ministrations. “Put me down.”

“No.” Hannibal says, continuing on his way. Will tries to see where they are, but with the lights out, his glasses gone, and the pain he cannot concentrate. He gives one last attempt to move out of Hannibal's hold, but the older man gently scolds him. “None of that, dear Will. We're almost there.”

Hannibal turns a corner and enters a room, and Will's nose is flooded with antiseptic and other medical smells. Shortly after entering, Will finds himself placed on a bed, but Hannibal doesn't let him go.

“Don't move.” Hannibal orders, but Will's body hurts too much to even think about trying to get up. And the bed felt so good.

“Where am I?” he slurs. Hannibal doesn't answer, continuing to tinker with something in the darkness. Will hears a *click* and a small light is produced, illuminating Hannibal's features. The man's eyes practically glow red as he positions the light on a small desk next to the bed, and Will finally takes in the room.

He's been here before, just after he fainted after his fight with Emerson. The room is connected to the medical bay, separated by a curtain. He doesn't particularity like the room; he never really liked hospitals of any kind. However, Will doesn't have a choice whether he likes it or not. Even if he tries, he wouldn't be able to stand without feeling dizzy or any pain. The weight of the situation suddenly falls onto him, and he begins to laugh.

Hannibal is by his side in an instant, the shadows from the flashlight and the lack of glasses making his features sinister.

“Will?” Hannibal put his hand on his face, migrating it up to his forehead. “You're burning up.”

Hannibal turns away to grab something out of the medicine closet, and Will continues to chuckle.

“Why am I not surprised.” he mutters.

“Will?”

Will chuckles. “I'm not even supposed to be here. I should be home, eating supper and watching crappy television. Hell, I shouldn't even be in this goddamned prison at all. I should have begged my superiors to let me quit. That's all I wanted was to be able to quit and move away, but no. I don't have a fucking back bone and let them coerce me into taking this job.” Will's laughter grows, his bruised ribs starting to hurt, but he ignores them. Hannibal remains silent.

“And you know what the best thing is? No one likes me. Here or out in the real world. I don't have friends, Hannibal. I'm too different to them. Here, the only ones who seem to like me are the inmates who I'm trying to keep in this hell hole. And what do I get for it? Hatred from my own co-workers. Sure, some like me, but the rest hate me for just being good at what I do. It's not my fault none of them are trained, not my fault I know what I'm doing. I try to be nice and what do they do? They leave me behind to fend for myself.”

Will stops laughing. “They left me. They left me alone.” His dark humor dissipates as tears begin to well up in his eyes. “They left me behind. Said I'm the inmates' 'bitch' and left. They didn't know – don't know they might kill me. Your protection be damned, Budge almost killed me. What good is your protection if I can be snuffed out in an instant!” Will's breathing comes out faster and faster, and tears stream down his face. He doesn't notice Hannibal moving on top of him, cradling his face and putting his forehead against his own. He doesn't hear the criminal try to soothe him, stroking his face and hair. Will continues on, eyes closed and hysterical. “They don't know what could happen to me. They don't care. No one cares.”

His head is given a firm squeeze, making his snap his eyes open making watery blue meet near crimson maroon.

“William.” Hannibal says sternly, and Will's attention is his, he looses his grip. “I need you to calm down, or else you are going to hyperventilate. Can you do that for me, dear Will?”

Will tries, he really does, but his mind wanders instantly back to his failure and guilt rides over him. “They were right to abandon me. It's my fault.” Tears stream again, pouring over Hannibal's fingers. “My fault, my fault, my fault, my-”

Hannibal silences him with a kiss. Will is in too much of an emotional state to fully apprehend the action, but it snaps him out of his self-deprecation. The kiss is short, but enough. Hannibal draws back, looks Will over before sitting up. He keeps one hand on Will's warm face while he reaches over to grab the bottles he took from the medicine closet. Will watches as the doctor uncaps and takes out two pills from one and just one pill from the other. Gently, he helps Will sit up as he offers him the pills. Will shakes his head, turning away as Hannibal tries to nudge them into his mouth.

“Will,” Hannibal gently chides, and Will can feel his face heat up. “It's for your own good.”

“What are they?” Will asks, still keeping his head averted.

“Two are for the pain, and the other a mild sedative.”

“I don't want to sleep.” Will whimpers, shaking his head. “I don't know if I'll wake up.”

Hannibal tsks, but sets all the pills down on the desk. He brings both hands up to cup Will's face once more, making him look him in the eyes.

“I promise, Will, you will wake up again. You're safe with me.”

“But, you... you...”

“I know you still fear me, and that is good considering what I am,” Hannibal smiles and brings his face closer. “But I won't hurt you. Do you trust me, Will?”

The small voice in Will's head says 'no, don't', but he brokenly whispers, “Yes.”

Hannibal doesn't say anything as he picks the pills back up, and Will dutifully accepts them. After drinking water, Will is placed back down, but Hannibal doesn't leave his spot on top of Will. Will doesn't mind. He finds the added weight on his legs soothing in a way; a helpful distraction from what his mind wants to do. His eyes slip close again, but soon open as Hannibal's hands wander away from his face to the buttons on his uniform. Will raises a weak hand to stop him.

“What're you doing?” he slurs, trying to sit up, but Hannibal pushes him down.

“I need to see if Budge did any more damage other than your neck.”

Will shook his head, trying to pull Hannibal away, but the sedative in his system made every action heavy. Hannibal gently took the limb and set it back on the bed, bringing a knee up to trap it against Will's side. Will doesn't protest. Hannibal's hands return to unbuttoning the uniform.

Once that is done, Hannibal gently takes Will's sling off. When Will doesn't make a noise of protest, Hannibal just as gently positions the other arm to rest on the bed. He then untucks the shirt as well as the under shirt, pulling the uniform top open. As he bends toward the desk once more, and Will doesn't murmur when Hannibal slices the under shirt open with surgical scissors.

Nimble fingers move over Will's torso, pressing here and there to see if there are any tender places. Will groans in discomfort when Hannibal presses too hard on his ribs, aching once more from being slammed to the floor and his laughing fit. Hannibal relents, rubbing over fading bruises from his fight with Emerson before his hands wander up to his shoulder.

Will cries out as Hannibal tries to remove the bandage, his free hand trying to stop him, but it only made it worse. Hannibal quickly grabs his right hand and pins it under his knee.

“Will. William.” Hannibal grasps Will's head as he shakes his head, too tired to try and thrash.

“No...” Will whines, and Hannibal hushes him.

“I need to make sure the stitches didn't reopen.” Hannibal explains, but Will continues to shake his head.

“No, no, no.” He sobs, the pain coming back. The pills Hannibal gave him worked wonders on the rest of his aching body, but his shoulder continues to throb. “Leave it alone. Please leave it alone.”

“Shh, it's okay. I won't touch it for now.” Hannibal appeases, stroking Will's hair. After Will calms down, he begins to bandage Will's neck and face, laying kisses after he's done.

“You never said,” Hannibal starts, putting gauze and scissors back on the dresser. “Who it was you left you behind.”

“Does it matter?” Will whispers, sleep crawling around the edges of his conscious. He swallows as he remembers Freddy's abandonment. While they weren't friends, and maybe Will did have a thing against him, he would never have left him behind if their roles were reversed. And the other guard who did try to help him just dropped him as soon as Freddy told him to... It hurt more than Will is willing to admit. He bites his lip to keep from sobbing, not wanting to make a fool out of himself than he already had. The tears fall despite his wishes, and Hannibal kisses them away.

“It does,” Hannibal answers, stroking Will's face and ears to help calm him. Will leans into the hands, remaining silent. “But I think I can guess who.”

The room falls silent, the only noise coming from Will's steadying breathing. Under Hannibal's ministrations, Will falls into a light slumber.

Voices echo throughout the room, hushed in an attempt to keep the slumbering guard asleep, but it is in vain. Will starts awake, the room completely dark and unfamiliar. He stumbles for his glasses on the stand, but instead of his stand his hand strikes a wall. Startled, Will gathers his thoughts as he remembers he is not in his own bed and not in his home. He's in the prison, held captive until a SWAT team can get him and the other guards out. However, he has no idea when that will be, or if any of the other guards are safe.

Slowly, he sits up, mindful of his shoulder and the dizziness that overcomes him. Will stays still, waiting for the spell to pass as he gingerly sets his feet on the floor. The unexpected chill running through his soles informs him his boots are missing, and the shift of open fabric finds his undershirt to be in tatters. Will rips the rest of it away, keeping his outer shirt on. He didn't want to be found completely shirtless if anyone comes to rescue him. He puts a hand on his shoulder, finding surgical gauze instead of a regular bandage. He frowns, not sure if he likes the idea of Hannibal doing things to him while he slept, whether they are for his benefit or not. He dares to stand, finding it easier than he originally thought, and seeks out the voices.

He quietly brushes the curtain aside, peeking around to find a lone emergency light working over head. He doesn't question it long enough, distracted by the people talking. He cannot see very far without his glasses, but he can barely make out Hannibal standing in the doorway of the medical bay, blocking it off from whoever is on the other side. Seeing he he hasn't been seen yet, Will makes his way closer.

“How many guards?” Hannibal asks.

“Including Pup?” the other inmate replies. “Eleven. Among them is Freddy Lounds.”

“Really?” Will hears the darkness creeping into Hannibal's voice and shivers. “Has he said anything?”

“No, doc, he hasn't.” says the inmate. “How's Pup holding up?”

“He's fine. Where's Budge now?”

“We threw him in a cell for now, waiting for you to drop by for a visit.” the inmate laughs. Will cannot see, but he can tell Hannibal is smiling. Moving closer, Will stubs his toe on a rolling table. He curses, and he can see the blurry Hannibal turn on him.

“Will, you should be resting.” Hannibal draws closer, becoming clearer and clearer. He bends to inspect Will's foot, but Will backs away.

“What are you up to, Hannibal.” He asks, and he can make out a frown on the doctor's face.

“Nothing you should concern yourself with, dear Will.” Hannibal stands and turns back to the inmate who remains in the hallway.

“I will deal with Budge later, but for now,” he pauses. “Who is watching the guards?”

“The Tooth Fairy, doc.”

“Dolarhyde.” Hannibal smiles. “Perfect. Tell him he can do whatever he wants with Lounds.”

Will freezes, realizing the implications behind the statement and remembers what exactly put Dolarhyde behind bars.

“No, what are you doing?” Will asks, frantic. “Don't hurt them, please.” Hannibal looks at him, his blurry face not giving anything away.

“He's broken one too many rules, I'm afraid.”

“What rules? The prison's rules or yours?” Will snaps, moving around Hannibal to talk with the inmate. He is stopped as a hand grasps gently around his arm.

“Doc?” the inmate asks uncertainly.

“Do as you're told. Tell Dolarhyde he can have Lounds.” At those words, Will struggles.

“No, stop! Freddy could die.” he pleads.

“He will eventually. Dolarhyde is not one to do it quickly.” He chuckles darkly, and Will's has enough. Turning his head, he bites into Hannibal's hand. Hannibal lets out a surprised gasp and releases Will. The guard uses this to his advantage to run to the inmate.

“Please, don't do this.” But the inmate is already leaving, ignoring his pleads. “No!” Will shouts, running after the inmate before he is captured by Hannibal.

“William, calm down.”

“No! You can't do this. This is murder!”

“You need to rest, Will.” Hannibal soothes, dragging the struggling guard back into the medical room. He releases him long enough to lock the door before pulling him back to bed. Will fights as much as he is able, shouting all the way. As forceful as he is, Hannibal is gentle and mindful of Will's injuries as he pins him back on the bed.

“Lounds deserves what's coming to him. It's a shame I couldn't kill him with my own hands.”

“No one deserves to die!” Will bites back, squirming to escape, but Hannibal's hold is firm. The cannibal once again straddles his legs, using his body weight to keep Will down. Will continues to fight, scratching and biting, but this only earns him the loss of his hands as Hannibal pins them beneath his knees. The little strength Will gained during his sleep is sapped from him, his motions slowing each time he moves. Fury fades into sorrow and his screams turn into sobs. Will attempts to curl in on himself, and Hannibal lets him, moving away once he sees the fight leave him.

Will hides his face in his hands, drawing his knees up. It's all his fault. All his stupid fault. He shouldn't have agreed to take this job; shouldn't have allowed himself to be forced into it. He should have listened to Barney and stayed away from Hannibal Lecter. He should have been more cautious, more observant. His stupidity is what led him to where he is now, and now it is going to cost a man his life.

He flinches as Hannibal slides in behind him on the bed, curling tighter into a ball. Hannibal disregards his actions, gently unfurling him. Will tries to curl in again, but Hannibal's legs effectively tangle with his, and arms wrap securely around his torso. Hannibal buries his face in the crook of his neck, taking a deep breath that makes Will shiver. Hannibal strokes Will's exposed chest and stomach, much like Will used to do with his first dog when she was scared of storms. It's comforting, but it doesn't distract Will from the fact Lounds is probably being tortured as they lie there. He makes another effort to get up, but he only ends up pulled closer.

“Stop it.” Will whimpers, but Hannibal shushes him. His hand trails lower and lower, resting at the edge of his pants.

“Lounds deserves what's coming to him, Will. Please understand you have no choice in the matter.” The hand moves over the top of his pants and continue moving further down. Will gasps. “You may think otherwise, but this isn't your fault. None of this is your fault.”

“I-I should have reported your actions yesterday.” Tears start to fall again, which are quickly kissed away. “I knew something was wrong, something was different.”

“But whether you reported it or not it would have happened. I only wanted you out of danger. That's why I asked when you were on leave.” The hand squeezes, and Will's breath hitches. “Had I been sent to solitary or watched closer it wouldn't have mattered. This plan would have happened sooner or later. A pity it didn't turn out the way we wanted it.” A rub and a groan follows. “Then again, this only sped up my plans with you.”

“M-me?” Will struggles to keep his breathing under control, but he fails. Hannibal nods in his neck, mouthing the skin he finds.

“After the break out, I would lay low for a few months. Preferably out of state. However, I would return for you, to keep an eye on you. I would sneak into your home on occasion to make sure you got plenty of sleep, perhaps by physically holding you down or have you conditioned to be sleepy after smelling lavender. Or, I can make you food. You don't eat nearly enough, which worries me. I'm an excellent cook, I'll have you know.” Will groans, but he isn't sure if it is because of Hannibal's meaning or his hand. “Now that I know you are prone to sleep walking, I would be your hound guiding the lost sheep back home, and you wouldn't be any wiser and out of danger.”

The hand pulls away to unbutton Will's pants, but doesn't do anything after that. Will knows he should fight, or at least put up the pretense of being unwilling, but they both know it wouldn't be true. Will's body picks up at the promise of what's to come, but his mind still wanders to what's happening to Lounds. How can he enjoy this when a man is dying? Hannibal shifts, and Will gasps again. He remembers all the conversations they had, the subtle flirting and looks. It was never meant to go this far; Will was never going to see Hannibal again. But now, now he didn't know. With all the tension between them and what's happened, Will can't help but want to fall into the abyss.

Will shakes as Hannibal brings his lips to his ear, placing a kiss to the lobe. “I'll keep you safe, Will, whether you approve of my methods or not. You are mine.”

The hand moves, and Will falls.

Chapter End Notes

I got a tumblr~
http://indestructibleannajay.tumblr.com/
Drop me a comment or any questions you might have for me. I'll make sure to respond :D
Also, thanks for sticking around for these stories. I know I'm not the most punctual person, but I try to make it worth the wait.

Works inspired by this one

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